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Subject: Wetzel Chronicle (3-20) Editorial - Paden City Residents Deserve Transparency, Clarity

Paden City Residents Deserve Transparency, Clarity

March 20, 2019
Wetzel Chronicle

Numerical values aside, the fact remains that Paden City's drinking water contains an excess of a dry cleaning chemical considered by the EPA to be "most likely carcinogenic to humans."

However, when considering the numbers, it is argued that someone's odds of getting cancer from PCE in their drinking water would increase by one in 1 million if they consumed 17 parts per billion of the chemical over a lifetime, according to the Agency of Toxic Substances and Disease Registry.

Furthermore, the concentration of PCE in Paden City's water supply is 5.5 parts per billion. The maximum allowable contaminant level for the chemical set by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is 5 parts per billion.

Paden City residents have been given these facts though, over and over. If they didn't attend the March 4 council meeting, when a letter was read by Mayor Clyde Hochstrasser stating the above-mentioned information, then they might have heard such from someone who did attend the council meeting. Or, perhaps they read the story when the Wetzel Chronicle released our news coverage from the meeting on our website that week. Or, perhaps they read the information the following week when each Paden City water customer received a memo-type correspondence, without a date or signature, stating the information. The news then broke regional, and even nationwide.

Still, we feel that Paden City residents are looking for more. Browsing social media, and the comments in response to this news story, we can confidently state that residents ARE looking for more than just an impersonal letter or the repetition of information from governmental agencies. Is that water safe to drink? Is the water safe to use for bathing? Are children at a higher risk of ill affects from drinking water contaminated with PCE? What about pets? Do animals have a different reaction to drinking water contaminated with PCE?

Why were residents informed about this in March, when it's been reported that the city found contamination at one of its wells about six months ago?

We recommend a town meeting which includes representatives from the local, state, and federal levels.

We recommend complete transparency and clarity. The people of Paden City deserve this.